

Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO STATE WASHDC 5217

INFO AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GR

SUBJ: ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY FOR
GENERAL ELECTIONS

1. SUMMARY. GOG PUBLISHED DECREE AUGUST 29 PROVIDING FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIONS FOR ELECTIONS. MINISTER OF INTERIOR IN ACCOMPANYING PUBLIC STATEMENT OBSERVED GOG CONSIDERS IT HAS DUTY TO OPEN ROAD FOR RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY. GREEK PUBLIC IS BUZZING WITH SPECULATION THAT PM CARAMANLIS MAY ANNOUNCE DATE FOR GENERAL ELECTIONS DURING MAJOR SPEECH AT OPENING THESSALONIKI FAIR. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER OF INTERIOR CHRISTOPHER STRATOS ANNOUNCED AUGUST 29 THAT LEGISLATIVE DECREE WAS APPROVED SETTLING VARIOUS MATTERS REGARDING ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIONS FOR ELECTIONS. STRATOS SAID INASMUCH AS GOG CONSIDERS RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE WITH OTHER GREAT NATIONAL PROBLEMS OCCUPYING GREEKS, INSTRUCTIONS HAVE BEEN ISSUED TO LIFT "ALL OBSTACLES WHICH COULD DELAY EXPRESSION OF PEOPLE'S CHOICE ONCE THE REQUIRED CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN MET." STRATOS SAID THESE PREPARATIONS WHILE URGENT REQUIRE CEASELESS EFFORTS

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GIVEN INERTIAL OF SPIRIT AND DISRUPTION OF SERVICE

AND GOVERNMENTAL MACHINERY DURING PERIOD OF DICTATORSHIP.

3. DECREE SPECIFICALLY RESTORES VOTING RIGHTS TO THOSE STRICKEN FROM REGISTERS BY APRIL 21 REGIME, CREATES POLLING STATIONS THROUGHOUT NATION, PROVIDES CREDITS FOR ELECTION PREPARATIONS AND ESTABLISHES LEGAL SUPERVISORS FOR ELECTIONS. MINISTER STRATOS POINTED OUT THAT NATIONAL BUDGET UNDER DICTATORSHIP DID NOT PROVIDE FOR EXPEDITURES FOR ELECTIONS "SIMPLY BECAUSE NO ELECTIONS WERE EVER INTENDED." STATEMENT ENDED WITH CLARIFICATION THAT NEW DECREE IS TECHNICAL IN NATURE AND DOES NOT ESTABLISH DATE OF ELECTIONS, ELECTORAL SYSTEM OR NUMBER OF DEPUTIES.

4. COINCIDENCE OF MINISTRY'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE PREPARATIONS FOR ELECTIONS WITH PRIORITY NEWS ITEM THAT PM WILL DELIVER MAJOR SPEECH ON DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES IN THESSALONIKI AUGUST 31 HAS GENERATED SPECULATION THAT CARAMANLIS MAY ANNOUNCE TIMETABLE FOR ELECTIONS, PLEBISCITE ON KING'S RETURN, OR AT LEAST STRUCTURAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEW PARLIAMENT.
TASCA

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